Marital Adjustment and the Sex-Typed Personality Characteristics of Married Student Couples

By
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For Judy whose gentleness and care have helped me through this trying time and with whom I have shared many beautiful moments.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Council of
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Marital Adjustment and the Sex-Typed Personality
Characteristics of Married Student Couples

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The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between marital adjustment and the sex-typed personality characteristics of married couples. Certain demographic characteristics also were studied. Central to this study was the idea that sex-role stereotyping is occurring in this society between men and women of all ages and that it creates stress in relationships.

Two psychological instruments, a Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) and a Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), as well as a demographic questionnaire (Questionnaire) were presented to 200 married student couples at the University of Florida. Usable data were collected from 100 of these couples.

Pearson Correlation Coefficients and T-Tests were used to answer the various research questions. This study did not demonstrate any evidence of sex-role stereotyping or stress in the marriages of the couples in the sample. Several possible factors may have been

responsible for this. Those that were reviewed included (1) flexibility in sex-role behavior, (2) length of marriage, (3) the college experience, and (4) the contemporaneity of the issue of sex-role stereotyping.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research was to study the relationship between marital adjustment and sex-typed personality characteristics of married couples. The population studied consisted of married undergraduate and graduate student couples. At least one of the spouses in the couple was enrolled full-time at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. In the academic year 1969-70, approximately 4,000 married students, composing 21% of the student body, were enrolled at the University of Florida. The most recent survey, conducted in October of 1976, indicated that 5,500 of the university's approximately 28,000 students were married.

Purpose of this Study

This study was designed to investigate the level of adjustment in the marriages of college couples as a function of the sex-typed personality characteristics of each spouse. Certain demographic characteristics were studied also. The research questions were:

1. What is the relationship between sex-typed personality characteristics and the level of adjustment in the marriages of student couples?

2. For each couple studied, what is the relationship between each spouse's perceived level of adjustment?

3. For each couple studied, what is the relationship between each spouse's internalized sex-typed personality characteristics?

4. Is there a difference in the level of marital adjustment experienced between husbands and wives in the student population?

5. Do spouses differ regarding their internalized perceptions of sex-typed personality characteristics?

6. What are the relationships between selected demographic characteristics and the level of adjustment in the marital relationship?

7. What are the relationships between selected demographic characteristics and sex-typed personality characteristics of married student couples?

Discussion of the Problem

Central to this study was the assumption that sex-role stereotyping is a pervasive, general phenomenon occurring in this society between men and women of all ages. According to Webster's unabridged Third New International Dictionary, a stereotype is defined as:

> a standardized mental picture held in common by members of a group and representing an oversimplified opinion, affective attitude, or uncritical judgement (as of a person, a race, an issue, or an event). (1971:2238)

Sex-role stereotyping, then, may be considered the process of attempting to make an individual or individuals conform to a pre-existing mind set. The damaging effects of sex-role stereotyping result when a particular group of people lose individual characteristics and are overtly and/or covertly manipulated into a fixed or general pattern of behavior.

Various social movements such as Women's Liberation represent responses directed at widely held stereotyped beliefs regarding the differences between men and women. A study of history illustrates that when a society begins openly to question the meaning of existence and the value of the individual there develops a time of uncertainty and confusion. That time has come for the institution of marriage.

The traditional concept of marriage currently is being called into question by men and women who think that the roles expected of them are too stifling. Studies on role conflict in marriage suggest

that it is women who must make the greatest adjustment in the relationship. Tarvis (1973) found that unhappily married women were more likely than happily married women to think that men are sexists and are better off than women in this society. Satisfaction with the division of labor in the household was strongly related to marital satisfaction. Men were more content than women with the distribution of domestic tasks: 62% of the men were very satisfied compared with 44% of the women. Furthermore, 75% of the men dissatisfied with their marriages were satisfied with the division of labor while, of unhappily married women, only 43% were satisfied with the division of labor. Nevill and Damico (1975) concluded that all women, whether married or not, have difficulty in defining their various roles. Of the three groups of women studied--married, single, and divorced--the authors noted that the married group experienced significantly more conflict with respect to roles. They interpreted these findings to mean that marriage is a more stressful situation for women than for men.

Parsons and Bales (1965) coined the terms "instrumentality" and "expressivity" in their conceptualizations of the male and female personality. Instrumentality was defined as a masculine trait associated with the pragmatic and cognitive aspects of life, while expressivity was depicted as feminine in nature, highlighting caring and communal activities. Since Parsons and Bales, other theorists have borrowed or expanded on this dichotomy (Bakan, 1966).

Whether intentional or not, the social reality of sex-role constructs has been used to support the idea that men and women inherently are different. Social-psychological research has tended to maintain these differences between men and women based on socially approved sex-role expectations.

Jung (Campbell, 1971) was one of the first theorists to recognize that strict sex-role stereotyping has dehabilitating effects on men and women. Although he did not develop fully a social theory regarding the differences between men and women, he did propose a theory that men and women have female (anima) and male (animus) components, and that these "archetypes" were crucial determinants in the developmental unfolding of the human personality.

More recently, sex-role flexibility and psychological health have been topics of discussion by authors such as Bem (1975) and Constaninople (1973). The healthy personality, according to Bem, is composed of the best of masculine and feminine characteristics. Research has supported the idea that rigidity in highly sex-typed behavior is maladaptive and creates mental health problems in males and females. Bem's theory that the healthy personality should be androgynous (having a combination of both male and female characteristics) was based partly on the increased amount of flexibility in behavior possessed by individuals. In general terms, a person may demonstrate competence and assertiveness (masculine attributes) as well as companionship and sensitivity (feminine attributes). The literature on this topic will be reviewed more extensively in chapter two.

It should be noted that if androgynous individuals are more adaptive than highly sex-stereotyped individuals, and the literature seems to bear this out, the quality of life within the marital situation should be affected. Androgynous couples may experience less stress in their relationships due to their ability to adapt to new situations as they arise.

Many questions have been raised as a result of the discussions surrounding sex-stereotyped behavior and the recent perspectives

concerning mental health and the androgynous personality. The research questions that were proposed attempted to address these issues.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This review of the literature will include: (1) the development of sex-roles from an historical perspective, (2) pervasiveness of sex-stereotyped roles, (3) confusion and conflict over sex-stereotyped roles, (4) role theory and dyadic interaction, (5) parameters of marital adjustment, and (6) androgyny.

Development of Sex-Roles from a Historical Perspective

Research indicates that the socialization of masculine and feminine sex-roles occurs at a very early age. In a study by Block, Von der Lippe, and Block (1973), it was discovered that learning socially approved sex-roles takes place through what the authors call "reactivity." Traditional sex-roles are passed on to offspring through "selective reinforcement of complementary reactions by responding to the child in sexually implicit ways" (1973:337). These authors noted that: (1) high-masculine/high-socialized and high-feminine/high-socialized individuals originate from family systems in which the parents display unambiguous and traditional role patterns; (2) low-masculine/high-socialized and low-feminine/high-socialized individuals come from families in which the parents present a variety of alternative role interpretations suggesting an androgynous outlook; (3) high-masculine/low-socialized and high-feminine/low-socialized children come from families in which the same-sex parent rejected the child, was neurotic, and offered an inadequate model for identification; and (4) low-masculine/low-socialized and low-

feminine/low-socialized individuals come from families typically experiencing conflict and psychopathology. Parents in these families failed to inculcate any consistent role patterns in their children due to their unhappy marriages. The authors concluded that a process of culturally sanctioned sex-stereotyping involves reactivity and/or modeling of the same-sex parent's behavior, while culturally unapproved behavioral patterns are a function of the type of family in which a child is reared.

Biller (1971) discovered a relationship between sex-role attitudes and the way in which children are reared in fatherless families. After examining the variables that were associated with the growth and development of children having androgynous personality characteristics, he concluded that the absence of fathers in upper middle class families created a situation in which the mother became more authoritative, particularly if she worked outside the home. The sons in these families were found to be less aggressive and competitive, and more dependent and nurturant than boys coming from families with fathers in them. Daughters in these fatherless families were found to be more independent and assertive, and more likely to view themselves in a vocation other than that of a homemaker. Biller suggested that the convergence of sex-roles is a function of the psychosocial conditions existing in this milieu. Additional studies are needed in order to examine this assertion.

Selcer and Hilton (1972) investigated the attitudes of children from a very traditional sub culture and from a sub culture emphasizing far less distinction in sex-stereotyped roles. Children from non-traditional families behaved in ways that were significantly removed from stereotyped masculine and feminine role patterns. The results of this study, however, must be interpreted cautiously since they were

obtained from a small sample, failed to define the population conclusively, and confused sex-role stereotyping with sex-role behavior. Kagan's and Moss' (1961) investigation of sex-role attitudes lends further support to the idea that masculine and feminine characteristics are developed at an early age.

A tentative conclusion which may be drawn from these studies is that sex-typed or androgynous personality characteristics are instilled into children at a very early age and tend to remain stable throughout adult life. The powerful influences of family life seem to serve as accurate predictors for the particular sex-stereotyped roles that males and females eventually adopt.

Pervasiveness of Sex-Role Stereotyping

Many studies have shown that men with masculine characteristics are valued more highly in this society than women with feminine characteristics (Dinitz, Dyness, and Clarke, 1954; Sheriffs & McKee, 1953; and Smith, 1939). Fernberger (1948) was one of the first to explore systematically this phenomenon. From a survey adopted from Look magazine, he measured the sex-role attitudes of graduate and undergraduate students at Pennsylvania State University and concluded that both men and women believe that women are at the heart of any disturbances that occur in a relationship; that men are more intelligent; and that women are more loquacious, passionate, and sensitive. Men generally felt that women should assume a secondary position in a relationship. Fernberger concluded that social biases regarding the sexes are universal and independent of sex.

Seeman (1950) studied the attributes of physical prowess, physical attractiveness, and vocational success as they applied to a sample of male and female college students. He found both men and women agreeing

that performing well in physical games and achieving vocational success are more important to men than to women, and that to be physically attractive was more important to women than to men.

The Fernberger and Seeman studies were replicated by Neufeld, et al., (1974) in order to determine if there was a change in stereotypic perceptions over a 20-year period. Strict attention was paid to the details of each study to insure that they were repeated accurately. Results indicated that there were no obvious differences between the attitudes of college students of 1948-50 and students in the year 1974 regarding stereotyped sex-roles. The authors suggest that it is misleading to assume that sex-role stereotyping is disappearing and that "the above stereotypes may reflect long lasting, basic sex differences" (1974:253).

Attitudes of high school students offer insights into beliefs concerning sex-roles. A study by Nelson and Goldman (1969) suggested that boys and girls in a variety of groups differ in their attitudes concerning sex-roles. While girls favor an increased involvement in activities outside the home, boys almost unanimously desire a wife who is a homemaker exclusively.

Komarovsky (1973) investigated the attitudes of college male seniors regarding the role of wife as breadwinner. Four types of responses emerged: (1) "traditionalists," making up 24% of the men sampled, rejected the idea of their wives having a job outside of domestic and civic responsibilities, (2) "pseudo feminists," comprising 16% of the men, approved of their wives working, but attached strings to that approval which made it impossible for this situation to actually occur, (3) "modern traditionalists," (48%) felt that it was crucial for wives

to stay home during their children's pre-school years. Work outside the home was governed by the qualification that wives be home when the children return from school in the afternoon. Men in this group generally agreed that they would help their wives during the child rearing years with the exception of tasks such as the laundry, changing diapers, and cleaning, and (4) "feminist types" (7% of the sample) agreed that their participation in family life would be based on mutual cooperation and an understanding that their wives' careers were equally important.

In another study by Komarovsky (1976), beliefs about traditional and non-traditional sex-roles were explored in a sample of married male graduate students. Out of a sample of 62 males interviewed, only one male reported that he would be willing to allow his wife to obtain an education while he worked full-time and delayed his own educational plans. One-third of the males sampled felt that their self-esteem would be threatened by a reversal of sex-roles. A majority of the males accepted their wives' working to support them even though the wage earning wife is often perceived by males as a threat. One-third of the group supporting traditional sex-roles approved of their wives working, since their status as wage earners was temporary. The husbands in this group realized that their positions as primary wage earners would be established upon graduating from college and acquiring a job. Komarovsky found that the men in this study were more egalitarian in behavior than in ideology. On many occasions, professed traditional beliefs gave way to flexible adjustments in the marriages of college students. She found an association between high levels of marital satisfaction, reported by males, and their adjustment to a situation in which the wives were the key money earners. The student husbands in this study maintained

their beliefs about men and women by deemphasizing the adjustments they had made in their marriages. Thus, in a statement offering insight into how values change, Komarovsky wrote that "in a period of change, new norms will be more readily accepted if they serve the interests of the individual" (1976:28). The ambitions of male graduate students in this study, as applied to educational and vocational goals, created conditions conducive to flexible behavior even though traditional beliefs about sex-roles remained the same.

Goodes's (1963) thesis generally corroborated these findings. Even though there is a trend toward egalitarian relationships due to the rapid rise of women in the work force, stereotyped beliefs about the differences between the sexes have been internalized while behaviors have adjusted accordingly.

Differences in attitudes between single and married college women were reported in a study by Rappaport, Payne, and Steinmann (1970). The Inventory of Female Values was administered to married and single college women. Results indicated that the single group was significantly more family oriented than the married group in the categories of "perceiving self" and "the ideal woman." Although these two groups agreed in their beliefs that the majority of men would want an "ideal woman" with a strong intra-familial orientation, the authors concluded that the traditional female stereotype is maintained more by single college women than by married college women. While single college women generally indicated that their primary goals were those of fulfilling the roles of wife and mother, married student women appeared to value more highly self-actualizing goals such as planning a career. Although the authors never made this deduction, it may be that the differences between

the married and single groups were based on the dichotomy between "first hand experience" (the married group), and an idealization of the roles of wife and mother (the single group). Perhaps married women, having had the opportunity of experiencing the restrictions attached to the homemaker role, begin to seek ways of enhancing themselves beyond the boundaries of conventional role patterns.

Studies examining the attitudes of mental health clinicians also report stereotyped perceptions regarding differences between males and females. Broverman and Broverman (1972) found that the literature consistently indicated a positive relationship between the social desirability of masculine and feminine attributes and clinical ratings of the same behaviors as to their normality or abnormality. Based on the idea that positively valued masculine traits form a cluster entailing competence, and that positively valued feminine traits reflect warmth and expressiveness, a sex-role questionnaire was given to 79 male and female mental health clinicians. The authors expected that clinicians would maintain distinctions in their concepts of healthy behavior in men and women paralleling stereotypic sex differences. Upon comparing the clinicians' judgements as to what constitutes the healthy male and female personality, it was discovered that the desirable masculine characteristics (competency cluster) were ascribed to the healthy man more often than to the healthy woman. However, only half of the socially desirable feminine characteristics (warmth-expressiveness cluster) were ascribed more often to women than to men. They concluded that women were being evaluated negatively by the clinicians. Implicit in the clinicians' assessments is the idea that healthy women differ from healthy men since they are perceived as being more easily influenced, submissive, less aggressive,

less independent, less competitive, less adventurous, less objective, more conceited about their appearances, more emotional, and more excitable in minor crises.

Similar findings were reported in a study by Neulinger (1968) in which male and female psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers were asked to take 20 paragraphs based on Murray's Manifest Needs Scale and rank them on how accurately they described the Optimally Integrated Personality (OIP). According to Neulinger's findings, characteristics such as dominance, achievement, autonomy, and aggression were attributed to the male personality significantly more often than to the female personality. Sentience, nurturance, play, succorance, deference, and abasement were rated higher for the female OIP than the male OIP. Neulinger found clear evidence of contradictions among clinicians regarding the healthy male and female personality, and that "the sex orientation of this society is not only shared, but also promoted by its clinical personnel" (1968:55).

In conclusion, evidence exists suggesting that the biases of many members of the helping professions influence their descriptions of the optimally functioning person. The ideally healthy person was usually defined by applying masculine characteristics. Devaluation of women within the clinical setting could have far reaching effects on the type of educational, vocational, personal, or marital counseling which is employed. Choosing to ignore personal biases regarding the emotional health of men and women invites additional complications for the marriage counselor in counseling married couples. If the therapist supports the husband's need for dominance and superiority, dependency and inferiority in the wife may be encouraged. At the least, women may experience

conflict and confusion as the result of counselors imparting values and suggestions that ultimately are counter-productive to their best interests and welfare.

For example, Miller and Mothner (1971) have observed that sexual inequality creates strife between males and females and that the marital relationship frequently serves as a vehicle for promoting this discord. Therefore, it behooves the counselor to pay attention to this situation since clinical judgements may be influenced by unexamined biases.

Research by Rosenkrantz, et al., (1968) indicates that sex-role stereotyping exists among members of this society regardless of a person's sex, socio-economic class, religion, or educational level. Potentially stressful situations may occur when women and men have divergent opinions about the female sex-role. Steinmann and Fox (1969) studied women in one North American and two South American urban-industrial communities in order to discover how women perceive themselves in their roles and how they think the "man's ideal woman" would perceive these roles. Results indicated that both North and South American women believed that the "man's ideal woman" would be conventional in her views, placing the home-making and family roles over "outward achieving" activities. However, North American women tended to be more outspoken in their need to be involved in a vocation that would offer a sense of fulfillment outside of the family system. In another study by Steinmann (1975), it was noted that the contemporary woman is experiencing a dilemma as a result of the need to do her "own thing" while at the same time maintaining "ultra-femininity" and desirability.

Confusion and Conflict Over Sex-Stereotyped Roles

Confusion over appropriate sex-role behavior has been known to affect the types of goals that women establish for themselves. Horner

(1968) utilized the Thematic Aperception Test (TAT) to investigate the psychological barriers that women may be facing in their attempts to achieve success in a career. A definite motive for avoiding success was discovered in 65% of the women respondents. However, only 10% of the men sampled gave an avoidance type of response to the TAT profile. In order to understand the barriers women perceive, responses were classified into three categories: (1) fear of social rejection, (2) self-doubts about one's adequacy as a person or about one's femininity, and (3) total denial of any possibility of success. Horner surmised that aggressive masculine traits, associated with a concept of success and competition in this society, foster feelings of inadequacy and insecurity in women. As a result of these feelings, many women who abandon career aspirations and become homemakers adopt conventional role patterns which they might not adopt, were they not also intimidated.

Women's fear of success also was examined by Tomlinsin-Keasey (1974). This study, which supports Horner's conclusions, indicated that there is a conflict between society's role demands for females and the personal aspirations of females.

The existence of a negative valuation of the traditional feminine role also was noted by Baruch (1974). In a sample of college women, he discovered that cognitive development and the degree of femininity reported were significantly associated. Citing research, Baruch observed that women scoring highest in femininity were the least likely to gain in I.Q. Also, intelligent women students were not encouraged by educators in their efforts to realize their career aspirations, while their male counterparts did receive encouragement. This observation was supported by the fact that fewer women than men pursue graduate studies. A conclusion drawn from this study was that the lack of a genuine sense of

self-worth and an overall feeling of self-confidence on the part of women seem to be related to the particular personality traits that this society values in women.

Page (1973) demonstrated that male dominance and social status are two social forces inseparably linked together, with which women must contend. Women with career goals were found to experience high levels of anxiety associated with a fear of success. It was further noted that this fear of success was related to a belief on the part of women that there would be social disapproval should they attempt to find niches in the competitive world of work that is dominated by males.

The importance of role saliency and self-esteem which are associated with sex-roles have been discussed by Weis (1970) who suggested that role saliency has two components: (1) the degree to which implementation of the self-concept within the social environment is possible, and (2) the degree to which satisfaction is the outcome of a particular role enactment. Weis made two hypotheses: (1) role saliency among women will be a function of the level of self-esteem reported, and (2) demographic variables such as age, educational background, and the number of children and their ages will vary systematically with the level of self-esteem and role saliency experienced by women. Data gathered positively linked the level of self-esteem with role saliency. Greater role saliency was associated with greater self-esteem and vice versa. Weis concluded that the psycho-social status of women in this society is a reflection of the sex-stereotyped roles women are expected to adopt.

Ricely (1973) found that self-esteem, role saliency, and sex-role identification are interrelated. She investigated the relationship between conformity to sex-role stereotypes and feelings of self-esteem in male and female college students. It was hypothesized that the degree

of conformity of one's own sex-role would be directly related to one's level of self-esteem and that the degree of this relationship would be affected by other mediating variables. A relationship between self-esteem and conformity to one's sex-role was found in the male but not in the female sample. In females, conformity to the male sex-role was correlated positively with the level of self-esteem. There was no significant correlation between the level of self-esteem reported by women and conformity to the female sex-role. Ricely concluded that conformity to male stereotypes by females is associated with higher levels of self-esteem that conformity to the female stereotype. The pressure to conform to male sex-stereotyped roles, in the face of an opposite pull to be "ultrafeminine," creates and fosters conditions of stress and ambiguity in women and in their relationships with men. Literature on role stress and mental health will be reviewed later in this chapter.

The "ideal" sex-role concepts of men and women were investigated by Elman et al., (1970). Their results indicated that the male and female sex-role stereotypes are indicative of how both male and female subjects describe the "ideal man" and the "ideal woman." The "ideal woman" is viewed as less aggressive, less independent, less active, more emotional, and less decisive than the "ideal man." In comparison, males and females perceived the "ideal man" as significantly less religious, less tidy, less gentle, less sensitive, and less expressive than the "ideal woman." A conclusion that Elman made is that women were valued and desired more for their greater warmth and expressiveness while men were valued more for their competence and independence. Women reported dissatisfaction with existing sex-role patterns in this society.

Gordon and Hall (1974), in a study of 229 college educated women, investigated the self-images of feminine woman. The women's perceptions

of how males view femininity was the best predictor of various types of conflict experienced by women. Critical to a woman's method of coping with conflict were her perceptions about herself. Self-image was also associated with happiness and satisfaction. The number of conflicts related to the work-home roles generally decreased as women felt that the males' perceptions about stereotypes were balanced by the males' support and patience.

In another study, Cardi (1972) presented a cluster of competency and reliability traits to 62 women in order to find out how they describe the ideal "adult male" and "adult female." These women were divided into low and high sex-stereotyped groups, based on their differentiation between an "adult male" and an "adult female." Subjects played the Prisoner's Dilemma Game in a number of trials with a partner of the same sex and then with a member of the opposite sex. Competition in this game was most noticeable between high stereotyped females and other females than between high stereotyped females and males. Low stereotyped females cooperated more with other females and competed more against males. The group of high stereotyped females was the least cooperative in its interactions with members of either sex. The author suggested that for this group of females, compliance with the culturally designed roles and status of women was closely associated with self-depreciation and distrust of other women as evidenced by their lack of cooperation in the experimental situation.

Hjelle and Butterfield (1974) investigated the self-actualization patterns of two groups of women (conservative and liberal) labeled according to the Attitudes Toward Women Scale. Results indicated that women reflecting "liberal profeminist attitudes" were more self-actualized

than women having traditional sex-role attitudes. These authors concluded by stating that "these findings suggest that profeminist subjects perceive themselves as relying more confidently upon their own internal norms without seeking constant support from others for self-validation." Research to be reviewed in the area of androgyny will tend to support this conclusion.

To summarize the review of literature in this section, women in this society seem to be experiencing confusion and conflict regarding sex-role identification, due to the high value placed on male attributes and the negative assessment of characteristics considered feminine. In addition, expectations which males and females have as to the roles women should adopt also result in conflict and confusion.

Role Theory and Dyadic Interaction

Although an extensive review of the literature on role theory should date back to the work of George Herbert Meade, such an effort is judged to be beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, only the aspects of role theory pertaining to the marital relationship and sex-role behavior will be discussed.

Udry (1974:227) defines a social role in the following way:

> ...a set of norms for the behavior of persons occupying certain positions in a society. They may be seen as generalized expectations held by people (with wide variation) that anyone in a certain position should behave in certain ways. These roles tend to be more stereotyped than the actual behavior of people occupying the position. For example, there are certain expectations as to how fathers should behave toward their children. In actual fact, there is far more variation in the behavior of fathers than there is in peoples' expectations of fathers.

The expectations that husbands and wives hold for each other within the confines of the marital relationship led Parsons and Bales (1965) to distinguish between "instrumental" and "expressive" roles. Instrumental

roles, such as paying bills, fixing the car, and making important financial or career-related decisions, are usually fulfilled by husbands. The expressive roles, such as household responsibilities and taking care of the children, are usually the responsibilities of the wife. Parsons and Bales suggested, however, that instrumentality and expressivity are not mutually exclusive and may be adopted by either partner, depending on the situation.

For example, Leik (1963) developed an experimental situation in which he observed the behavior of a group of men and women with their own spouses as well as with strangers of the opposite sex. He noted that the behavior of husbands and wives varied in accordance with Parsons' and Bales' schema. A clear distinction in sex-role behavior was evident when husbands and wives were involved with strangers of the opposite sex. Males exhibited high levels of instrumentality and females displayed high levels of expressivity. However, when husbands and wives did the same exercise together, there was a significant reduction in sex-stereotyped behavior.

Kenkel (1957) discovered discrepencies between internalized sex-stereotyped beliefs and actual behavior in the dyadic relationship. A pre-task questionnaire which was completed by a sample of men and women showed that both sexes expected men to be more influential in making financial decisions. However, in an experimental situation involving a variety of decision-making tasks power was evenly distributed between husbands and wives. Kenkel concluded that "the belief in male dominance, though widespread, may rest more upon myth than fact" (1957:24).

Taking a quasi-phenomenological approach to the question of why individuals experience role conflict, Arafat and Yorburg (1973:47) suggested the following:

> The subjective feeling of being frustrated, or of being pulled in opposite directions in the performance of a role occurs when expectations between role partners are not mutual (the situation of a career woman married to a traditional husband), when economic, intellectual, physical, or emotional resources are inadequate or inappropriate for performing a role (the situation of the unemployed male), when the demands of two or more roles are incompatible (the experience of the employed mother), when role definitions are lacking or ambiguous (the situation of the divorced person or of unmarried couples who are living together), or when the role prescribes inconsistent or contradictory values or behavior (the role of the teacher which requires a subjective approach in relating to individual students and, at the same time, objectivity in evaluating student performance).

In an effort to uncover what, if any, were the current role discrepancies between men and women, these authors interviewed a sample of 1048 males and females from a variety of settings, including business firms, university campuses, shopping centers and several professional buildings. Their results revealed that: (1) more women than men would be willing to work for a woman employer, (2) more women than men believed that the liberation of women was threatening to the male ego, (3) 30.4% of the males sampled and 17.3% of the females sampled felt that only the husband's career was important in the issue of deciding where a family should reside, and (4) 43% of the males disapproved of the dual role of homemaker and career woman for the wife. In addition these authors noted that 66% of the males sampled and 80% of the women agreed that household chores should be divided equally between spouses. Arafat and Yorburg concluded that discrepancies exist between male and female attitudes regarding sex-roles and division of household tasks. Responses of women were consistently and significantly less traditional than the responses of men.

An association between sex-role stereotyping and the psychological well-being of men and women in this society was demonstrated by Gurin, Veroff and Feld (1960). They found that women, more often than men,

experience marriage as a stressful situation. Women were found to have more marital problems than men did and tended to be less satisfied with their marriages. In addition, the women were more inclined to blame their spouses for their unhappy marriages.

Gove (1972) identified four reasons for women having higher rates of mental illness than men: (1) women bring fewer resources to the marital relationship than men do, usually engaging in the sole occupation of homemaker, while men are involved in at least two major roles, those of household head and worker; (2) the role of housewife is experienced by women as unrewarding in contrast to a career outside of the family; (3) women are discouraged from working outside the home because they fear discrimination, low pay, and poor working conditions; and (4) the husband's career takes priority over the wife's career. Gove concluded:

> Married women do tend to have higher rates of mental illness than married men. But when single men are compared with single women, divorced men with divorced women, and widowed men with widowed women, it is found that these women do not tend to have higher rates than their male counterparts. (1972:291)

An interpretation of these findings should take into account the complex dynamics involved in a marriage. It would be a misinterpretation and an overgeneralization to simply say that "women have it rough and men have it made" within the context of marriage. For example in a study by Zamon-Gass and Nichols (1975) married partners of both sexes reported their individuality was being suppressed by the other partner and that inequalities existed in the marital relationship. In the pages to follow, a review of the pertinent studies in the area of marital adjustment, satisfaction, and happiness will attempt to identify the important factors which determine whether a marriage is experienced as satisfying or unsatisfying. Factors considered relevant to the level of marital

adjustment will be examined: (1) mate selection, (2) masculine self-image, (3) perceptual congruence between partners, (4) power, (5) women's work status, and (6) changing sex-roles.

Before considering the various factors affecting the success of a marriage, it is important to note that there is ambiguity and confusion surrounding terms such as "marital happiness," "marital satisfaction," "marital stability," and "marital adjustment." For example, Hicks and Platt (1970:553) made the following observation.

> For our society marriages are assessed by two norms: happiness and stability. Happiness is an extremely personal and subjective phenomenon and difficult to measure with the tools that are currently available to social scientists.

Terms such as these have been used interchangeably in the literature for some time with little regard as to their exact meaning. Without a uniform set of definitions, comparisons between studies is at best a delicate affair. A review of the following studies is done in full view of this fact.

Parameters of Marital Adjustment

Mate Selection

Winch's (1958:74) theory of complementary needs is based on the idea that one chooses a mate who has "deep seated characteristics very different from one's own." Mate selection is understood as a way of fulfilling, through another person, certain deficiencies in one's own personality. That people choose each other because of a narcissistic need to satisfy certain deficiencies in their own personalities, has not been empirically supported in the literature. For example, a study of dating college couples (Bowman and Day, 1971), provided little support for this theory. Similarly, Blazer (1963) found after administering the Edwards Personality Preference Schedule to young married couples that mate selection

was more likely to be the result of what these couples had in common rather than what was missing in their individual personality makeups.

If the theory of complementary needs is not strongly supported by empirical evidence, a question arises as to why many family theorists still appear to be attracted by this theory. Segfried and Hendrich (1973) offer one possible explanation. They maintain that attraction between the sexes is based on reciprocal role attitudes rather than personality dimensions. For instance, a highly masculine male and a highly feminine female may be attracted to each other because their expectations of each other are clear and precise.

Segfried and Hendrich may, inadvertently, be offering further support for Winch's theory. If sex-typed personality characteristics underlie sex-role behavior, then applying Winch's paradigm, a highly masculine male may be attracted to a highly feminine female because certain of her personality characteristics, such as expressiveness, are missing in his own psychological makeup. Additional research on this topic is needed in order to clarify these issues.

The research on homegamy in the marital relationship tends to support the theory that high rates of happiness in marriage are related more significantly to the male's role performance than to the female's role performance. For example, Tharp (1963:90) made the following observation:

> The wife being more accommodating, the husband more rigid in role needs, the likelihood marital success is a function of the husband's possession of the expected instrumental needs and capacities.

Research on conventional role patterns and the tendency of women to adapt to these patterns will be reviewed more extensively in the section related to the masculine self-image.

Coombs (1968) suggested a position on mate selection lying between "complementary needs" and "homegamy." There are three basic components to his theory: (1) persons with similar backgrounds learn similar values; (2) sharing similar backgrounds leads to positive interaction, communication, and understanding; and (3) the relationship between two people becomes self-perpetuating based on feelings of mutual satisfaction.

One alternative theory about mate selection offers a possibility for further study. King (1974), applying Maslow's theory on self-actualization, discovered that self-actualizing people choose other self-actualizers as mates.

Knowing some of the reasons for a couple's becoming involved with each other to begin with may be helpful to the marriage counselor since many problems experienced by couples may be the result of the particular attitudes and beliefs that each spouse brought to the relationship.

Masculine Self-Image and Marital Adjustment

Most of the research on marital adjustment and the self-concept follows a pattern reflected in a study by Dean (1966). In this study, involving 117 couples, personality scores for each spouse were correlated with marital adjustment scores. Dean found that the wife's perceived level of marital adjustment was directly related to the husband's rating of his own emotional maturity. There was no significant relationship between the husband's perceived level of marital adjustment and the wife's rating of her emotional maturity.

An earlier study in this area demonstrated the way in which stereotyped perceptions on the part of each spouse are significantly related to marital adjustment scores. Corsini (1956) administered the General Satisfaction of Self, Concept of Mate Selection in Marriage, and the

Adjective Q-Sort Technique to 20 couples. When husbands and wives rated each other in a stereotyped manner, higher levels of happiness within the marriage were reported. A high level of happiness was noted in marriages in which the husbands were bound to the masculine stereotype. The husband's perceptions of himself and of the way in which his wife perceived him were critical to the perceived level of marital adjustment for both partners. The wife's perception of herself and of the way in which her husband perceived her was not significantly related to the perceived level of marital adjustment reported by either partner.

That a mutually shared concept of masculinity plays an important part in marital adjustment was further demonstrated by Drewery and Roe (1969). Two groups of husbands and wives were compared to each other. One group was composed of male alcoholic patients and their wives. The other group was a control group similar in most respects (social, economic, and occupational status), except that the husbands in that group were not alcoholic patients. They found a lesser degree of husband/wife agreement as to the husband's image in the patient group than in the control group. Agreement between the control group husband's self-description and his wife's description of him was based on a shared consensus of the masculine stereotype. However, discrepancies between the patient's self-description and his wife's description of him may be attributed to a lack of a shared concept of masculinity. The authors suggested that differences between the two groups may be due to an absence of a mutually shared concept of masculinity in the alcoholic patient group.

A study by Barry (1970) indicated that the background and personality factors in husbands (not in wives) are associated with marital success.

An analysis of the marital relationship utilizing conflict theory and research, revealed that, among other things, women have a need for security and support during the transitory period from being a wife to becoming a mother. If the husband has a "healthy" personality, he will be able to respond better to his wife's needs, thus avoiding stress in the relationship. Barry concluded, upon reviewing the literature on marital adjustment, that women depend much more upon marriage as a source of satisfaction and self-fulfillment than do men. This could account for the relationship between the level of adjustment in a marriage and the personality variables in males. The tendency of many women to place all of their "emotional chips" into a marriage as a source of satisfaction will be approached in a later section of this chapter by analyzing the nature of power and the resources that spouses differentially acquire and contribute to a relationship.

Perceptual Congruence between Partners

There is evidence that self-spouse perceptual congruence patterns strongly influence the level of satisfaction in the marital relationship (Kelly, 1941; Dymond, 1954; and Luckey, 1960a). Critical to this point of view is that high levels of satisfaction experienced by partners in a marriage are based on each person having approximately the same view of his/her partner as the partner has of him/herself. This is true whether the "self" is described in terms of personality traits or in terms of marital role expectations.

After having couples complete the Leary Interpersonal Check List, Luckey (1960a) reported that happiness for the marital pair was related to four factors: (1) husband-wife congruence on husband's self-image, (2) congruence of husband's self-image and his ideal self-image, (3) congruence of husband's self-image and his concept of his father, and

(4) congruence of the wife's concept of her husband and her concept of her father. Identification with the masculine stereotype by husbands and wives was found to be related to marital happiness. However, the husband's perception of his wife's self-image did not influence significantly the level of happiness in the marriage.

This was also reported by Preston, et al., (1952) who examined two groups of married couples, one group about to seek counseling and another having recently terminated counseling. Significantly more congruence was reported regarding perceptions spouses had for each other in the post-marital counseling group than in the pre-counseling group. Even though the post-counseling group reported a significantly higher level of happiness than the pre-counseling group, the husband's agreement with his wife's self-image was not a factor in determining the level of marital satisfaction.

Stuckert (1963) found that the masculine stereotype is crucial to the level of marital happiness or satisfaction experienced by husbands and wives. The perceived level of marital satisfaction in the group of wives he sampled was associated with the accuracy with which wives were able to perceive the role expectations their husbands had of them. However, no significant relationship was found to exist between the husband's perception of his wife's expectations and their marital satisfaction scores. A possible interpretation of the marital satisfaction scores of wives in this group is that a crucial role for married women is that of "accommodating" the husband with respect to role expectations and personality factors. A successful accommodation will not occur if the wife is not able to perceive accurately her husband's expectations. Since there is less demand on a husband to make reciprocal accommodations

in terms of his wife's expectations, it is not vital that he perceive accurately her expectations.

Power

An analysis of power in marriage and the family may help to explain the persistence of the masculine stereotype. Blood and Wolfe (1965:11) in their study, Husbands and Wives, defined power as "the potential ability of one person to influence the other's behavior." These authors defined authority as "legitimate power, i.e., power held by one partner because both partners feel it is proper for him/her to do so" (1965:11).

The importance of the concept of power as defined by Blood and Wolfe lies in the fact that "The balance of power between husbands and wives is a sensitive reflection of the roles they play in marriage--and in turn has many repercussions on other aspects of the relationship" (1965:4). Power, according to these researchers, is determined not only by existing social norms but by the number of "resources," such as educational level, skills, and expertise, that each partner brings to the relationship.

In order to examine the nature of power in marriage, Blood and Wolfe asked a cross section of families in American society to complete an interview questionnaire designed to find out which partner made the final decision in typical family situations. A weakness of this study might be the way in which these authors tabulated their data. Blood and Wolfe assumed that every decision-making situation was of equal importance in the marriages of these couples. For example, the question of who decides where the family will live was given the same weight as the question of who decides what doctor to call when the children are sick. Blood's and Wolfe's argument that power in the marriages of these couples is evenly distributed is weakened by the undifferentiated weighting of their questions.

However, other aspects of this study provide important information about life in the average American family. These authors note that the patriarchal family is on the decline:

> The role of culture has shifted from sanctioning a competent sex over an incompetent sex to sanctioning the competent marriage partner over the incompetent, regardless of sex. (1965:161)

Nevertheless, husbands continue to have more power in the marital relationship since they continue to bring more resources to it. As these authors suggest, the husband's power in the relationship is based on (1) high occupational prestige, (2) high earnings, and (3) higher educational level.

Involvement in a career has been the subject of many studies and can be related to a theory of power and resources. Aldous (1969) found that the males' participation in the job market was related significantly to a high level of involvement in family life. Without a job, men experienced a loss of power and influence in the affairs of their families.

Kolb and Straus (1974), in another study relating to power, asked whether or not a relationship might exist between the power structure of a family and marital happiness. The results of their study indicated that power and happiness were related in four basic ways: (1) low power husbands feel unhappy in their marriages; (2) the opposite is the case with high power husbands; (3) high power in wives was not associated with marital happiness; and (4) low power in wives was not associated with marital happiness, but neither was it associated with marital unhappiness.

A conclusion drawn from the above studies is that the concept of power, which is based on the number of resources each spouse brings to the relationship, is an important factor in determining the level of happiness experienced in marriage and family life. Since World War II,

women have been acquiring more resources. Consequently, many of the recent studies on the American family indicate that power is equally distributed between many partners. Furthermore, the literature on this subject suggests that currently men have more power because they continue to contribute more resources, and, as women gain more resources through an advanced education or other means, power will become more equally distributed.

Women's Work Status and Marriage

Documentation on the woman's work status by Safilios-Rothschild (1970) revealed that working women with "high work commitment" reported more satisfaction with their marriages than non-working women. These women felt that they were more involved in the decision-making processes within their marriages than was the case with non-working women. Grover (1963) identified the existence of a negative relationship between the wife's work status and marital adjustment. However, he reported a smaller negative relationship in the upper than in the lower socio-economic classes.

In contrast to these studies, Locke and MacKeprang (1949) reported no significant difference between the marital adjustment level of wives engaged in full-time employment and the marital adjustment level of those who were full-time homemakers. Nor was there a significant difference in the marital adjustment levels of husbands in these two groups.

Most of the literature in this area currently indicates that a significantly greater degree of stress is occurring in marriages of women who are not engaged in activities outside of the home environment than in the marriages of working wives. Howenstein, et al., (1972:265) defined stress as "dissonance between one's present social milieu and the

expectations one had formed from early experiences. . .". In a study by these authors, dissonance regarding role dissatisfaction was confirmed physiologically. The recorded blood pressure readings of 508 married women from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds were reported to vary significantly between housewives and working wives. For housewives, blood pressure was positively related to feelings of strain from housework and low self-evaluations related to their homemaking roles. In contrast, the blood pressure readings of working wives were related to positive attitudes toward their working roles, e.g., "not wanting to quit their jobs and spend more time at home, assigning high importance to job success, and low self-evaluation of their success at their jobs" (1972:266).

The question of whether or not women change their values as a result of pursuing a career was examined by Howe (1973). His hypothesis that two groups of mothers would differ in their scores on the Inventory of Feminine Values, with unemployed mothers reporting more conservative self-concepts and more conservative "ideal selves" than employed mothers, was not supported. However, women in the unemployed group reported significantly higher occurrences of anxiety than women in the employed group. Anxiety in the unemployed group was related to discrepancies between the ideal self and the real self, between the self and the perception of the husband's ideal wife, and when the ideal self was perceived as more liberal than the perception of the husband's ideal wife. This research demonstrated that involvement in a career has a significant affect upon one's self-image and overall state of being.

The dynamics of the marital relationship have been noted to change as a result of women entering the work force. For example, Hoffman (1960)

observed that working wives tended to reject the "traditional sex-role ideology" in favor of a more egalitarian form of participation on the part of both spouses. Although husbands in these families assumed a greater share of the household tasks, Hoffman noted that many women still accepted the dominant position of the male in the family structure.

Androgyny

The entry of women into the work force in the last 20 years has affected the ways in which men and women relate to each other. The stereotypical belief that "a woman's place is in the home" is collapsing in the face of evidence demonstrating that women are as competent and resourceful as men in many arenas. Williamson (1970:27) suggested that this situation has affected the institution of marriage in the following way:

> Marriage has emerged from an institution based on certain biological and economic functions sanctified by religious authority, to a relationship oriented to companionship and affectional needs.

Personality characteristics of men and women continue to be differentiated along masculine and feminine lines. The strict segregation of the "expressive" and "instrumental" roles is one major reason for the existence of conflict and stress in marriages.

Komarovsky (1962), in her book, Blue Collar Marriage, showed that extreme role segregation and stereotyping among working class respondents limited the possibility of husbands sharing in the "expressiveness role." Components of the expressiveness role such as self-disclosure, companionship, and mutual psychological support, were lacking in the marriages of these couples.

Similarly, Balswick (1970) discovered that the males in her study simply did not function on an emotional level necessary for real companionship. She found this situation to exist among all socio-economic groups,

but particularly among lower class males. Although sexual distinctions may be on the decline, inexpressiveness, at least for males, is still viewed as consistent with a "proper" definition of the masculine role.

In contrast to strict role segregation is role amalgamation. Associated with role amalgamation is the concept of androgyny, which is concerned with the integration of the best of both male and female characteristics. Consider Heilbrun's (1973:38) definition of androgyny:

> This ancient Greek word--from andro (male) and gyn (female)--defines a condition under which the characteristics of the sexes, and the human impulses expressed by men and women are not rigidly assigned.

The following is Bem's (1974:155) interpretation of what androgyny means:

> Both in psychology and in society at large, masculinity and femininity have long been conceptualized as bipolar ends of a single continuum; accordingly, a person has had to be either masculine or feminine but not both. This sex-role dichotomy has served to obscure two very plausible hypotheses: first, that many individuals might be "androgynous; that is, they might be both assertive and yielding, both instrumental and expressive--depending on the situational appropriateness of these various behaviors; and conversely, that strongly sex-typed individuals might be seriously limited in the range of behaviors available to them as they move from situation to situation.

One of the major reasons for androgyny becoming a popular concept is that it seems to offer a way of approaching the problems that men and women are facing due to confusion and conflict over sex-roles. The social issues that were so volatile in the sixties seem to have affected and permeated the entire society in the seventies. One consequence of this phenomenon is that stereotyped behavior, whether masculine or feminine, is no longer adequate in meeting the demands of most social situations. Many women feel stifled in conventional role patterns while men are experiencing frustration over an inability to express themselves.

Thus, most theorists writing on androgyny argue that highly stereotyped masculine and feminine roles severely restrict the range of

behaviors a person may have at his/her disposal in any given situation. For example, Bem (1975:2) suggested that androgynous individuals are more flexible in their behavior than highly stereotyped individuals.

> In contrast, because his or her self-definition excludes neither masculinity nor femininity the androgynous individual should be able to remain sensitive to the changing constraints of the situation and engage in whatever behavior seems most effective at the moment, regardless of its stereotype as appropriate for one sex or the other. What we are hypothesizing, then, is that whereas a narrowly masculine self-concept may inhibit so-called feminine behaviors, and a narrowly feminine self-concept may inhibit so-called masculine behaviors, a mixed or androgynous self-concept may allow an individual to freely engage in both masculine and feminine behaviors.

Several of Bem's studies have been motivated by a desire to test the hypothesis that androgynous individuals are more adaptable in their behaviors than persons who have a strong masculine or feminine orientation. In one study (Bem, 1975) it was hypothesized that masculine or androgynous individuals would not be influenced by social pressure as much as feminine individuals. This hypothesis was confirmed in an experiment involving students from an introductory psychology class at Stanford University. In another study by Bem (1975) both males and females were allowed to interact with a kitten in order to discover whether feminine and androgynous subjects would be more "nurturant and playful" with a kitten than masculine subjects. Results indicated that feminine and androgynous males did interact significantly more with the kitten, a behavior judged to be "feminine in nature," than the group of males with masculine characteristics. Bem concluded that:

> Androgynous subjects of both sexes displayed a high level of "masculine" independence when under pressure to conform, and they displayed a high level of "feminine" playfulness when given the opportunity to interact with a tiny kitten. (1975:19)

Bem concluded that these findings represent:

> the first empirical demonstration that there exists a distinct class of people who can appropriately be termed androgynous, whose sex-role adaptability enables them to engage in situationally effective behavior without regard for its stereotype as masculine or feminine. (1975:20)

Research on androgyny in marriage is noticeably lacking. Previously mentioned studies, however, have linked stereotyped roles to stress in the marriages of couples. A theory of androgyny would imply that two people in a relationship would be able to relate to each other based on situations as they arise and not according to fixed expectations that are a function of stereotyped roles. Males could be expressive and playful in certain situations and females could be pragmatic and decisive in other situations. This flexibility in behavior on the part of husbands and wives would allow for creativity and vitality in the relationship. Such an undertaking is not without a risk factor. In the absence of clearly defined roles, instability and confrontation between mates regarding their particular needs or wants will be unavoidable. The distinctions between "separateness" and "togetherness" may become more obvious as husbands and wives begin to express and assert themselves in the course of their relationship. Two strongly willed personalities may clash, resulting in feelings of alienation.

But does not marriage, or for that matter any relationship, lend itself to risks and insecurities when two people have a strong emotional investment in each other? A theory of androgyny, like any other theory, should be realistic in its expectations. It should avoid any utopian or romantic expectations that the problematic aspects of being human will be eliminated. Perhaps the formulation of the concept of androgyny offers a possible alternative for the way in which males and females may relate

to each other as human beings. Future studies in this area, such as the one presented for consideration, may shed more light on this speculation.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design for this study was based on two concerns. First, there are very little data on the life of the married college student. Secondly, a correlation between the sex-typed personality characteristics of married couples and stress in the marital relationships have been alluded to in the literature; but rarely has an endeavor been made to explore systematically this relationship.

A descriptive research design was selected for use in this study. The purpose of descriptive research, as outlined by Issac and Michaels (1971), is to:

1. collect detailed factual information that describes existing phenomena,
2. make comparisons and evaluations,
3. identify problems or justify current conditions and practices, and
4. determine what others are doing with similar problems or situations and benefit from their experience in making future plans and decisions.

The rest of this chapter is concerned with the research methodology including (1) research questions, (2) description of the population, (3) sampling procedure, (4) selection procedure, (5) collection of data, (6) analyses of data, and (7) instruments and demographic questionnaire. Limitations of the study will be addressed also.

The Research Questions

This study was designed to investigate seven questions related to the effect of sex-typed personality characteristics on the level of adjustment in the marriages of student couples:

1. What is the relationship between sex-typed personality characteristics and the level of adjustment in the marriages of student couples?
2. What is the relationship between each spouse's perceived level of adjustment?
3. What is the relationship between each spouse's internalized sex-typed personality characteristics?
4. Is there a difference in the level of marital adjustment experienced between husbands and wives in the student population?
5. Do spouses differ regarding their internalized perceptions of sex-typed personality characteristics?
6. What are the relationships between selected demographic characteristics and the level of adjustment in the marital relationship?
7. What are the relationships between selected demographic characteristics and sex-typed personality characteristics of married student couples?

Population

The population consisted of married undergraduate and graduate student couples in which at least one of the spouses was enrolled full-time at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. Characteristics of this population were deduced from Stebbins' (1975) study. Her data, gathered from University of Florida students seeking graduate degrees from the College of Education, the College of Engineering, the College of Law, and the College of Medicine, indicated that the mean age of husbands was 28.4 years, and of wives, 26.9 years. The average length of the marriage for her sample was 5.4 years. Only 18% of student couples were married less than one year.

Data on the divorce rate of students at the University of Florida or for the married student population in this country were unobtainable. However, reporting on the current situation regarding married students, Clarke (1970a:4) wrote:

> We have here, then, married couples whose reported stress and satisfactions probably represent the adaptation of an ongoing relationship to the student situation rather than the reaction of newlyweds to the initial experience of marriage complicated by continuing bombardment by school-related stresses. On the other hand, most of our couples at some time close to the beginning of their marriages--nearly half were married a month or less before entering a student situation--did undergo the kind of double stress which we have described. And this experience may have affected them to the extent that their perceptions are still colored by it. Response to such questionnaire items as those related to stress and satisfaction in marriage cannot, therefore, be simplistically interpreted by reference only to the present situation of our couples. The past must also be taken into account.

Stebbins (1975) reported that a little more than 50% of the couples sampled were parents, with 58% having more than one child. Couples having children were slightly older than couples without children:

> The parent husbands and wives were an average age of 30.9 years and 28.8 years respectively, compared with 24.8 years and 24.1 years for the nonparents. Correspondingly, the average parent was married 8.3 years while the average nonparent was married 2.6 years. (Stebbins, 1975:48)

In Stebbins' sample, 88% of the women who were married to men pursuing graduate degrees had at least some college experience and 59% had completed at least a baccalaureate degree.

Clarke (1970a) reported a correlation between parenthood and educational level. Parent wives had significantly less educational experiences on the college level than parent husbands. Clarke and his associates observed that:

> there appears to be a greater educational gap between husband and wife in the parent group as opposed to the nonparent group, and that this gap is not narrowing for the majority of the parent couples. (Clarke, 1970a:11)

Data from Stebbins' study indicated that 67% of the wives, as opposed to 44% of the husbands, were employed. Whereas only 19% of the husband group were employed, 40 or more hours a week, 75% of the wives worked more than 40 hours a week.

> Hence, the wives tended to be employed more often, work longer hours, and earn more than their husbands. (Stebbins, 1975:49)

Sampling Procedure

Married students were selected from a list acquired from the Office for Student Services, University of Florida. The selection process involved a random sampling procedure. Beginning with the first name appearing on the list, every fourth name thereafter was drawn until the list was exhausted. An alternate pool of students, randomly selected from the list, but beginning with the second name on the list, was collected in the event more names would be needed. This situation did not arise. Two-hundred married student couples were contacted and usable data were obtained from 100 of these couples.

Selection Procedure

All students and non-student spouses meeting the following criteria were eligible for inclusion in the study: (1) married for at least one year, (2) at least one spouse was a full-time undergraduate or graduate student at the University of Florida, (3) United States citizen, (4) currently residing in Gainesville with his/her spouse, and (5) having a telephone listing in either the Gainesville Telephone Directory or the University of Florida Directory.

The rationale for selecting students with these characteristics was based upon three considerations: (1) students seeking degrees from one of the colleges within the university and married a minimum of one year would tend to provide a more stable, homogeneous population;

(2) requiring that students be United States citizens would tend to limit the possibility of unknown factors relative to foreign students from influencing any conclusions that may be drawn from this study; and (3) selection of full-time graduate or undergraduate students and non-student spouses, as opposed to part-time students, would tend to guarantee more stability and homogeneity of the population.

Collection of Data

The original plan was for a telephone call to be placed to married students selected for participation in the study. The purpose of the study was to be explained to either the husband or wife (Appendix D). If either spouse demonstrated a positive inclination to participate in the study, a package of materials was to be mailed immediately. Included in the package was (1) a cover sheet explaining the purpose of the study, plus instructions pertaining to the rest of the materials (Appendix E); (2) two copies of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI); (3) two copies of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS); (4) one copy of Demographic Questionnaire (Questionnaire); and (5) a stamped return envelope.

A margin of eight days following initial contact was established in order to allow respondents enough time to complete the Questionnaire and the instruments. The BSRI takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and the DAS, ten minutes. The Questionnaire can be completed in five minutes. A follow-up telephone call was placed to respondent households who had not returned the completed materials at the end of eight days. Those who had decided not to participate in the study were deleted from the list. However, if it was simply a matter of respondents forgetting to fill out the questionnaire, or of losing the packet, an additional two-week period was planned for the mailing of a second set

of materials and their completion and return. No additional contact occurred if at the end of the second two-week period the couple had not responded. This plan was abandoned soon after it was discovered that very few of the packages mailed out were being sent back in completed form.

A decision to change tactics was compounded by the fact that the initial telephone contacts to potential respondents were made in late May and early June of 1977, just preceding the final examination period for spring quarter at the University of Florida. Therefore, it was decided that direct personal communication with married students would be more effective in obtaining the completed materials. The conversation reflected in Appendix D was utilized in its approximate form when door-to-door contact with respondents was initiated. The BSRI, DAS, and Questionnaire were presented to 200 married student couples. Usable data were collected from 100 of these couples.

Stebbins (1975), in her study involving married students at the University of Florida, reported an attrition rate of 31.9% of the total sample on unreturned questionnaires. For the purposes of this study, it was felt that if 200 sets of questionnaires were distributed and a contingency plan was carefully followed, at least 100 sets of materials would be returned.

The attrition of the sample from the number of student couples who were given a packet of materials to complete to the number who returned the completed materials was 38%. The general consensus from couples who had not completed the materials after eight days was that graduation, moving, and final exams were the key elements preventing them from completing the questionnaires and sending them back.

Analyses of Data

A Pearson product moment correlation was used to analyze the data from research questions one, two, and three. Question one involved correlating the level of marital adjustment reflected in the DAS with the BSRI score. This correlation was used in cases where paired scores are expected to have a linear relationship (Van Dalen, 1973). All four sub-scale scores and the total scale score of the DAS were correlated with the BSRI scale score for males, females, and the total group.

In questions two and three the data derived were linear in nature. The second question involved the computation of correlations for each of the four sub-scales of the DAS as well as the total scale score, with the BSRI scale score for each of the couples. The third question involved correlating the BSRI scores for each of the married couples. A t-test was used in order to answer questions four and five.

Differences regarding the four sub-scales of the DAS and the total scale score between husbands and wives, using a .05 level of significance, were determined. Question five measured the differences between husbands and wives regarding the Masculinity, Femininity, and Androgyny scores obtained from the BSRI, using a .05 level of significance.

Questions six and seven involved the use of Pearson's correlation coefficients. In the sixth question, the criterion variable was the level of adjustment and the predictive variables consisted of the various demographic characteristics for husbands, wives, and the total group. The criterion variable for the seventh question was the BSRI score and the predictive variables consisted of the various demographic characteristics for husbands, wives, and the total group.

Instrumentation

Two psychological instruments, the BSRI and the DAS, as well as a Questionnaire were used to answer the research questions. The BSRI is a measure of psychological androgyny. Three scales, Masculinity, Femininity, and Social Desirability, make up the instrument. Each scale contains 20 personality characteristics. The BSRI was created on the assumption that a male with mostly masculine characteristics and a female with mostly feminine characteristics have a set of internalized beliefs about socially desirable masculine and feminine behaviors.

Self-described feminine and masculine characteristics determine the range of Masculinity and Femininity scores. Thus a person's androgyny is calculated by subtracting the Femininity (F) mean score from the Masculinity (M) mean score. As the difference between $\overline{F}$-$\overline{M}$ diminishes, the degree of androgyny increases; and conversely, high positive scores indicate Femininity while high negative scores reflect Masculinity. The full range of scores on the 60 item BSRI runs from 60 to 420. BSRI items extend from one ("never or almost never true") to seven ("always or almost always true").

Internal consistency of the BSRI is based on the coefficient alpha computed for Masculinity, Femininity, and Social Desirability scores of subjects in each of the two normative samples. Reliability of both samples is high: Masculinity, .86 and .86; Femininity, .80 and .82; Social Desirability, .75 and .70; and the Androgyny Difference score, .85 and .86.

Normative data were derived from two samples of college students at Stanford University and Foothill Jr. College. From the results of these data, it was reported that males scored significantly higher than

females on the Masculinity scale and females scored significantly higher than males on the Femininity scale. With respect to the Androgyny score, males scored on the masculine side of zero and females on the feminine side of zero.

That the Masculinity and Femininity scores of the BSRI are divorced from each other is evidenced by the fact that the normative samples have the following correlations: Stanford males, r = .11, females, r = .14; Foothill males r = -.02, and females, r = -.07.

Since previous research has disclosed that personality characteristics often are described in masculine and feminine terms (by "law people" and therapists alike), Bem checked to determine if the Androgyny score was not simply tapping a social desirability set. Product-moment correlations were run between the Social Desirability score and the Masculinity, Femininity, and Androgyny scores for both normative samples. While Masculinity and Femininity were, as expected, correlated with Social Desirability, there was almost a zero correlation between Androgyny and Social Desirability. This insures that the Androgyny score is not simply measuring a tendency to respond in a socially desirable direction.

The DAS was developed by Spanier "to assess the quality of marriage and other similar dyads" (1973:15). This scale was developed in response to clear-cut methodological problems and inadequacies of other marital adjustment inventories. After reviewing some 30 marriage instruments developed in this country, Spanier created a measurement of dyadic adjustment which included four empirically verifiable sub-scales: Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Cohesion, and Affectional Expression.

Spanier's definition of dyadic adjustment considered the "process of movement along a continuum..." (p. 17) as well as the quality of interactions and characteristics of the relationship at any given time. The difficulty in measuring a process is obvious in that the dimensions of whatever is being measured are subject to both qualitative and quantitative changes. Recognizing the difficulty in measuring marriage-as-process, and the over-simplification involved in the "snap-shot" approach, Spanier, in the development of his scale, considered the best of both approaches:

> Thus, we subscribe to the notion that adjustment is an ever-changing process with a qualitative dimension from well adjusted to maladjusted (1973:17).

A factor analysis was performed on 40 items judged to be the most appropriate in order to attempt to establish empirical verification for the sub-scales, as well as the overall definition of dyadic adjustment. After this analysis was completed, the list was reduced to 32 items. Most of the items, reported Spanier, assess the individual's perception of the "adjustment of the relationship" (1973:22). An acceptable conclusion is that differentiating responses between partners on the various items infers a difference in perceptions regarding the relationship's functioning.

Two forms of validity reported by Spanier suggest empirical verification for using the instrument in measuring marital adjustment. Criterion-related validity, based on the differences in responses to the test by married and divorced subjects, was p .001. Construct validity was assessed by comparison of the DAS with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale. Correlations between these scales were .86 for the married samples and .88 for the divorced group.

Internal consistency reliability for the total scale was .96; and the following dyadic components reported reliabilities of: (1) dyadic consensus sub-scale, .90; (2) dyadic satisfaction sub-scale, .94; (3) dyadic cohesion sub-scale, .86; and (4) dyadic expression sub-scale, .73. Scores ranged from 0 to 151 with the high scoring end of the scale suggesting adjustment and the low end suggesting maladjustment in the dyadic relationship.

The third and last instrument the respondents completed was the Questionnaire. The information from this instrument, such as age of both spouses and length of marriage, was used in answering a variety of research questions related to the level of marital adjustment occurring between spouses.

Limitations of the Study

(1) The BSRI and DAS are research instruments and there is considerable debate regarding the theoretical constructs underlying each instrument. Terms such as "sex-typed personality characteristics" and "marital adjustment," have not been applied uniformly in the literature, nor is there a uniform definition of either concept currently in existence.

(2) The problem of self-report questionnaires lending themselves to socially desirable response sets has been reviewed extensively in the literature. The fact that the authors of both instruments attempted to avoid such a phenomenon cannot erase the fact that reduction in variability of responses may be the result of socially desirable response sets.

(3) If it is found that sex-typed personality characteristics significantly affect the level of adjustment in the marital relationship

of student spouses, the generalization of the findings may be limited due to the fact that this sample may not be representative of the married population in this country as a whole.

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

An analysis of the results of this study will be divided into two sections: (1) description of the sample, and (2) analyses of the research questions. Those demographic variables considered to be most relevant to this study were the (1) age of spouses and length of marriage, (2) number of children, (3) highest level of education, (4) present student classification, and (5) employment status.

Description of the Sample

Age of Spouses and Length of Marriage

The mean age of husbands was 25.3 years and, of the wives, 24.1. The student couples had been married an average of 3.3 years.

Highest Level of Education

While 11% of the wives reported that their highest level of education was the 11th or 12th grade, only 1% of the husbands were in this category (Table 1). A fairly equal proportion of men and women, 35% and 39% respectively, were undergraduates. However, where there was found to be an approximately equal dispersion of women in each of the first three years of college respectively, (11%, 15%, and 13%) the majority of the male undergraduates (33%) were in their third year of college. Thirty-eight percent of the husbands and 43% of the wives were college graduates. Twenty-five percent of the remainder of the husbands and 5% of the wives held graduate degrees.

Present Student Classification

Fifty-one percent of the males were enrolled in graduate school and approximately half of this group had completed their second year of graduate work. Forty percent of the husbands were undergraduates with a large proportion of them (30%) in their senior year of college. Of the women, 20% were in graduate school and 28% in undergraduate school. Hence, fewer women than men were enrolled at the University of Florida. This is born out by the fact that only 4% of the males reported a non-student status while 51% of the women were non-students.

Employment Status

The work status of student spouses may help to explain why more of the husbands than their spouses are enrolled at the University of Florida. While only 6% of the males worked full-time or part-time and had a non-student status, 39% of the women sampled were working full- or part-time. Another 17% of the women were full-time homemakers and not enrolled in school. Far more men than women (57% as opposed to 21%) were unemployed and enrolled full-time in college. Thus, more wives than husbands were in the work force. This situation may imply one of two things: either that women in this sample are postponing their education in favor of helping their husbands obtain their education goals, or they have gone as far as they plan in college and are beginning to assume a homemaking or work role. Probably a combination of these possibilities best reflects what is occurring in this population.

Analyses of the Research Questions

To test the following research questions Pearson correlation coefficients and t-tests were calculated on scores pertaining to the various instruments employed.

Question 1: What is the relationship between sex-typed personality characteristics and the level of adjustment in the marriages of student couples?

An analysis of the data indicated that there were few significant relationships between the sex-typed personality characteristics of married students and the level of perceived marital adjustment. There was no significant relationship between the BSRI Masculinity and BSRI Androgyny scores and the four sub-scales and total scale score of the DAS (Table 2). Significant relationships were found to exist between the BSRI Femininity score and the Dyadic Cohesion, Dyadic Affectional Expression, and Dyadic Total scores. However, the total shared variance of these relationships was so low as to preclude any possibility of making a significant interpretation about the relationships in question.

Question 2: For each couple studied, what is the relationship between each spouse's perceived level of adjustment?

An analysis of the data indicated that there was a significant relationship between the DAS scores of couples in this study. The correlation coefficients were (1) Dyadic Consensus, .73; (2) Dyadic Cohesion, .61; (3) Dyadic Affectional Expression, .73; (4) Dyadic Satisfaction, .71; and (5) Dyadic Total Score, .82 (Table 3).

Question 3: For each couple studied, what is the relationship between each spouse's internalized sex-typed personality characteristics?

There was no significant relationship between each spouse's internalized sex-typed personality characteristics with respect to the BSRI Masculinity and BSRI Androgyny scores. There was a significant relationship between couples with respect to the BSRI Femininity score (Table 4).

Question 4: Is there a difference in the level of marital adjustment, as perceived by husbands and wives, in the student population?

No significant difference was found between the level of marital adjustment, as perceived by husbands and wives, in the student population (Table 5).

Question 5: Do spouses differ regarding their internalized perceptions of sex-typed personality characteristics?

Spouses differ significantly regarding their internalized perceptions of sex-typed personality characteristics with respect to their BSRI Masculinity (.05) and Femininity (.05) scores but not with respect to the BSRI Androgyny score. While husbands had significantly higher Masculine scores and significantly lower Femininity scores, the total or Androgyny was unchanged (Table 6).

Question 6: What are the relationships among selected demographic characteristics and the level of adjustment in the marital relationship?

There were no significant relationships among the selected demographic characteristics of (1) age of husband, (2) age of wife, (3) length of marriage, (4) quarters in attendance at the University of Florida, and (5) number of children in the family, and the level of adjustment in the marital relationship (Table 7).

Question 7: What are the relationships among selected demographic characteristics and the sex-typed personality characteristics of married student couples?

There were no significant relationships among selected demographic characteristics referred to in question six and the sex-typed personality characteristics of married student couples.

TABLE 1

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON MARRIED STUDENT SPOUSES

Variable	Husbands *(N = 100)	Wives (N = 100)
Age		
Mean	25.27	24.11
Standard Deviation	3.98	4.01
Highest Level of Education**		
11th grade	0%	2%
12th grade	1%	9%
1st yr. college	1%	11%
2nd yr. college	1%	15%
3rd yr. college	33%	13%
College graduate	38%	43%
Masters degree	16%	5%
Medical, Law, etc.	7%	0%
Ph.D.	2%	0%
Other	1%	2%
Present Student Classification**		
Not a student	4%	51%
Freshman	0%	3%
Sophomore	1%	7%
Junior	9%	7%
Senior	30%	9%
1st yr. graduate	15%	8%
2nd yr. graduate	21%	7%
3rd to 4th yr. graduate	9%	4%
Grad more than 4	6%	1%
Other	5%	3%
Work Situation**		
Working full-time & not a student	5%	29%
Working part-time & not a student	1%	10%
Staying home full-time/not working	0%	17%
Working part-time/student part-time	4%	5%
Working full-time/student full-time	3%	6%
Not working/student full-time	57%	21%
Working part-time/student full-time		

*N = 100 for the husband and wife groups respectively.

**Differences between husbands and wives significant beyond .001.

TABLE 2

PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS AMONG BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY AND DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE SCORES FOR 100 MARRIED STUDENT COUPLES

(N = 200)

Variables	Dyadic Consensus	Dyadic Cohesion	Dyadic Affectional Expression	Dyadic Satisfaction	Dyadic Total
Bem	r = .18	r = .06	r = .07	r = .13	r = .15
Masculinity	*s = .01	s = .42	s = .29	s = .07	*s = .03
Bem	r = .19	r = .28	r = .31	r = .20	r = .26
Femininity	*s = .007	*s = .001	*s = .001	*s = .005	*s = .001
Bem	r = .08	r = .18	r = .08	r = .08	r = .11
Androgyny	s = .25	*s = .01	s = .26	s = .25	s = .10

*Significant beyond .05 level.

TABLE 3

PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS AMONG DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE SCORES FOR 100 MARRIED STUDENT COUPLES*

Wives (N = 100)

Husbands (N = 100)	Dyadic Consenses	Dyadic Cohesion	Dyadic Affect. Expression	Dyadic Satisfaction	Dyadic Total Score
	.73	.61	.73	.71	.82

*All relationships significant beyond .001 level.

TABLE 4

PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS AMONG
BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY SCORES FOR 100
MARRIED STUDENT COUPLES

Wives

Husbands	Bem Masculinity Score	Bem Femininity Score	Bem Androgyny Score
	.02	.28	-.05
	s = .87	s = .005	s = .62

TABLE 5

T-TESTS ON DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCORES
FOR 100 MARRIED STUDENT COUPLES

Variable		Number of Cases	Mean	Standard Deviation	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-Tail Probability
Dyadic Consensus	Husbands	100	47.74	7.56	-1.23	196.24	.22
	Wives	100	49.12	8.31			
Dyadic Cohesion	Husbands	100	16.12	3.92	-1.49	197.25	.14
	Wives	100	16.92	3.68			
Dyadic Affectional Expression	Husbands	100	8.29	2.48	-1.40	196.54	.16
	Wives	100	8.76	2.27			
Dyadic Satisfaction	Husbands	100	39.12	6.35	- .08	195.47	.93
	Wives	100	39.20	7.12			
Dyadic Total Score	Husbands	100	111.35	17.59	-1.04	197.65	.30
	Wives	100	114.00	18.35			

TABLE 6

T-TESTS ON BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY SCORES
FOR 100 MARRIED STUDENT COUPLES

Variable	Number of Cases	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pooled Variance Estimate T Value	Pooled Variance Estimate Degrees of Freedom	Pooled Variance Estimate 2-Tail Prob.	Separate Variance Estimate T Value	Separate Variance Estimate Degrees of Freedom	Separate Variance Estimate 2-Tail Prob.
Bem Masculinity Score	100	104.35	12.82						
Husbands				*6.42	198	0.000			
Bem Masculinity Score	100	92.18	13.96						
Wives									
Bem Femininity Score	100	93.95	11.5						
Husbands				*-5.76	198	0.000			
Bem Femininity Score	100	103.26	11.33						
Wives									
Bem Androgyny Score	100	70.75	49.49						
Husbands							-1.54	180.84	.126
Bem Androgyny Score	100	83.7	68.05						
Wives									

*Significant beyond a .05 level.

TABLE 7

PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS AMONG DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE SCORES AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES FOR 100 MARRIED STUDENT COUPLES

(N = 100) in all cases

Variables	Dyadic Consensus	Dyadic Cohesion	Dyadic Affectional Expression	Dyadic Satisfaction	Dyadic Total
Age of Husband	r = -.02	-.19	-.03	-.23	-.14
Group	s = .87	s = .06	s = .79	s = .19	s = .18
Age of Spouse	r = .01	.22	-.05	-.22	-.13
Group	s = .89	*s = .03	s = .59	*s = .03	s = .20
Length of Marriage	r = -.04	-.26	-.09	-.25	-.18
	s = .72	*s = .01	s = .38	*s = .01	s = .07
Quarters in Attendance at the U. F.	-.02	-.26	-.08	-.21	-.16
	s = .87	*s = .01	s = .41	*s = .03	s = .12
Number of Children	r = .02	-.15	-.10	-.17	-.10
	s = .86	s = .13	s = .34	s = .10	s = .35

*Significant beyond .05 level.

TABLE 8

PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS AMONG BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY SCORES AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES FOR 100 MARRIED STUDENT COUPLES

(N = 100)

	Husbands			Wives		
Variables	Bem Masculinity	Bem Femininity	Bem Androgyny	Bem Masculinity	Bem Femininity	Bem Androgyny
Age of Husband	r = -.07	r = -.13	r = .03	r = -.08	r = -.15	r = .05
	s = .51	s = .21	s = .75	s = .45	s = .13	s = .64
Age of Spouse	r = -.10	r = -.09	r = -.03	r = -.06	r = -.03	r = .04
	s = .32	s = .38	s = .74	s = .57	s = .77	s = .72
Length of Marriage	r = .13	r = -.14	r = .0006	r = .06	r = -.10	r = .04
	s = .20	s = .17	s = .99	s = .57	s = .34	s = .70
Quarters in Attendance at U. F.	r = -.14	r = -.10	r = .03	r = .02	r = -.25	r = -.05
	s = .17	s = .30	s = .73	s = .86	s = .01	s = .62
Number of Children	r = -.005	r = -.02	r = -.01	r = -.04	r = -.10	r = -.03
	s = .96	s = .83	s = .92	s = .68	s = .37	s = .78

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between marital adjustment and the sex-typed personality characteristics of student couples. Certain demographic characteristics were also examined with respect to the population. The population studied consisted of married undergraduate and graduate student couples where at least one spouse was in attendance at the University of Florida in 1977.

A review of the literature suggested that there are many factors which are indicative of stress and satisfaction in marriage. In recent years, sex-role stereotyping has emerged as an important issue in domestic life. Research indicated that a pattern of sex-role stereotyping transcended ethnic, cultural, and educational boundaries.

One of the major objectives of this study was to investigate whether or not sex-role stereotyping was a significant phenomenon in the lives of married students attending the University of Florida. In conjunction with this and other questions, two psychological instruments, the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), as well as a demographic questionnaire (Questionnaire) were presented to 200 married student couples. The results of the collected data were reported in Chapter IV. The findings demonstrated that:

1. there was no significant relationship between the sex-typed personality characteristics of married student couples and the level of marital adjustment,

2. there was a significant relationship between spouses within each couple regarding the level of adjustment in the relationship,

3. there was no significant relationship between the sex-typed personality characteristics of each spouse with respect to their BSRI Masculinity and Androgyny scores,

4. there was a significant relationship between the sex-typed personality characteristics of each spouse with respect to the BSRI Femininity scores,

5. there was a significant relationship between the marital adjustment scores of husbands and wives in this sample,

6. the BSRI Masculinity and Femininity scores of husbands and wives were different significantly,

7. there were no significant relationships between selected demographic characteristics and marital adjustment scores reflected in the DAS for these couples,

8. there were no significant relationships between selected demographic characteristics and the sex-typed personality characteristics of these student couples.

This study did not demonstrate any appreciable evidence of sex-role stereotyping or stress in the marriages of these student couples. Several possible factors may be responsible for this situation, including, (1) flexibility in sex-role behavior, (2) length of marriage, (3) the college experience, and (4) the contemporaneity of the issue of sex-role stereotyping.

Flexibility in Sex-Role Behavior

The data in this study indicated that there was no significant difference between the androgyny scores of each spouse. At the same time, a significant relationship between DAS scores of couples was reported. If androgynous individuals are more adaptive than highly sex-stereotyped individuals, and the literature seems to support this point of view, the quality of life within the marital situation may be positively affected.

Sex-role flexibility and psychological health have been topics of discussion by authors such as Bem (1975) and Constaninople (1972). Bem has suggested that the healthy personality is composed of the best of masculine and feminine characteristics. Previously mentioned research indicates that flexibility in sex-role behavior is conducive to the development of healthy relationships. Bem's theory that the healthy personality should be androgynous (having a combination of both male and female characteristics) is based partly on the increased repertoire of behaviors possessed by androgynous individuals.

It may be that congruence in androgyny scores of couples in this sample has led to flexibility in sex-roles. Flexibility in behavior by spouses, particularly in the university setting where self-sacrifice is required in order to achieve educational goals, would obviously improve or aid the quality of life within the marriage. Androgynous couples may experience less stress in their relationships due to their ability to adapt to new situations as they arise.

Length of Marriage

The literature suggests that the length of a marriage is a crucial variable in determining stress and satisfaction in a relationship. The couples in this study were married an average of 3.4 years. Due to the fact that these marriages were in an early stage of development, malcontent with the relationship may not have been as problematical as it might be in later years. This line of thought is supported by Pineo's research (1961). In the process of completing a study initiated by Burgess and Wallin (1953), Pineo investigated the relationships of a sample of couples during their engagement period, after four or five years of marriage, and after 20 years of marriage. He found a significant

correlation between marital satisfaction scores and length of marriage. The longer a couple was married the less satisfaction regarding the relationship was reported. Another longitudinal study similar to Pineo's was conducted by Luckey (1966), who reported that, as the length of a marriage increases, experienced dissatisfaction with the relationship increases. Other studies which arrived at similar conclusions as Pineo's and Luckey's are Blood and Wolfe (1960), Luckey (1966), and Rollins and Feldman (1970).

The College Experience

The "elan vital" that seems to be part of the early stages of a marriage may, in the case of the University of Florida married student population, outweigh the shortcomings that are associated with the marriages of couples who have been living together for more than four years. There may exist a blend of factors that, considered as an aggregate, create a healthy dynamic tension between spouses while they are in attendance at a university.

Although a pattern of sex-stereotyped roles seemed to exist in this study, more women than men were the primary breadwinners, and more men than women were enrolled at the university part-time or full-time. These dichotomized roles do not seem to have adversely affected the relationships of these couples. Intuition would suggest that the self-concepts of husbands would be threatened as a result of role reversal. Although a picture of the self-concepts of husbands in this sample was not obtained, role reversal did not seem to have a negative effect on the marriages of these student couples. It may be the case that in the majority of instances, role reversal is viewed as a temporary situation commensurate with the completion of the particular educational objectives of each couple.

For example, a review of the major studies in Chapter III on college aged men and women indicated that sex-role attitudes have been internalized while behavior has adjusted accordingly (Goode, 1963 and Komarovsky, 1976). In Komarovsky's analysis of the married student situation, she noted that sex-stereotyped attitudes on the part of spouses are modified by the contingencies placed upon them by the experience of being in college. Student husbands were able to accept the idea of their wives supporting them, knowing that the situation would change once they were graduated and in the work force.

Komarovsky's sample of married students may be different than the married student population at the University of Florida; therefore, only a speculation can be made as to whether husbands and wives who participated in this study have expectations similar to those found in Komarovsky's sample. In any event, the effects of cultural "conditioning" may be so pervasive that married couples automatically assume that the male spouse should begin his career first, as a sort of security blanket or investment in the future. Another possibility is that women develop an awareness of vocational possibilities and are willing to delay choosing a vocation until a later stage in life. It is highly probable that at the heart of this matter is a socialization process which begins in early childhood.

In addition, discontent in the marriages of college students may be less noticeable because the factors that give rise to dissatisfaction have not yet begun to emerge. It cannot be denied that the college experience is a stressful situation for married students. Finances, the uncertainty associated with a fluctuating job market, and the stresses associated with academic life are realities. But marriage in the university setting may be unique in several ways. It can provide a

stimulating environment for intellectual growth and development. In addition, spouses living on or near the campus have the distinct advantage of knowing their neighbors and sharing with them a common pathos, something that is often lacking in the marriage of couples living in middle-class suburbs.

What is proposed here is that this sample of married students may have a relatively high degree of harmony and stability in their relationships due to the existence of a consensus regarding vocational goals and projected life styles. For example, with respect to the sample studied, it is plausible that a basic reason for congruence in the spouses' DAS scores has as it basis the knowledge that goals and aspirations about the future are held in common. Suffice it to say that the educational experience and temporary life style, with all of the attending sacrifices, can be surmounted best through a combined effort on the part of both spouses. Perhaps, in a very fundamental sense, one of the criteria for perceived adjustment in a marriage involves husbands and wives agreeing on the goals, aspirations, and expectations regarding their shared existence.

The Contemporaneity of the Issue of Sex-Role Stereotyping

For the married students in this study, sex-role stereotyping may have been an issue at one time, but does not seem to be one now. Perhaps a saturation point has been reached regarding this topic in the university community. Public debate centering around the rights of women and sex-role conflict has advanced beyond the infant stage. The university setting has served traditionally as the vanguard for debate surrounding controversial issues. College students typically are the first to experiment with new role patterns and modes of behavior. However, experimentation with sex-roles by married students is not only encouraged

by what is currently in vogue but by the pragmatics of the situation. Student couples who share a dream about the future will tend to form a better team even if it involves a reformulation of traditional role patterns.

This reformulation of traditional role patterns may be deeper and more longlasting in some instances than in others. The data in this study were not sensitive enough to measure these differences. The crux of the matter is that, in this study, questions such as why more husbands than wives are enrolled in college full-time pursuing a degree, or why women are the primary breadwinners in this sample remain unanswered. Perhaps the origin of this phenomenon lies in the primordial conceptions men and women have about their sex-role identities and how these identities are grounded in life's activities. Is it as simple as Blood's and Wolfe's (1960:99) assumption that, "If a wife has less education than her husband, the chances are she will be unusually satisfied with his income and less apt to go to work herself"?

The literature of the 1960's lends support to Blood's and Wolfe's thesis in the sense that, even in an age in which sex-roles and identity are open topics, a positive relationship exists between the instrumental aspects of the males' roles and marital happiness (Hicks and Platt, 1970). In addition, studies by Luckey (1960a and 1960b) indicate that ". . . satisfaction in marriage is related to the congruence of the husband's self-concepts and that held of him by his wife" (1960a:77). However the literature in the 70's presents a different view and suggests that women are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the homemaking role and the limitations that are the result of sex-role segregation.

Implications for Further Study

Family systems are very complex. People get married and stay married as the result of many different motives. Some of these motives are readily apparent to the researcher and others are not. From a methodological point of view, it might be informative if married student couples were compared to older married couples from socially and economically different backgrounds. Utilizing the DAS and the BSRI, or some other sex-role inventory, it might be found that married couples from a university setting and married couples from other backgrounds have differing viewpoints regarding sex-roles.

In any event, addressing the issue of sex-role stereotyping in the larger population of married couples might produce some interesting results. The issue is not dead. The divorce rate in this country has doubled in the last 15 years. In increasing numbers, couples are visiting marriage counselors in an attempt to resolve their disagreements.

A question that remained unanswered in this study centers around the decision-making process of married students attending the University of Florida. Why is the husband's education generally given more priority than the wife's? What agreements are made between couples regarding their roles after graduation? How often do conflicts arise as a result of role patterns that are agreed upon within the university setting? The data obtained from this study do not generate any information about these questions. Yet they are fairly significant questions because it appears that this generation of married students is more liberal in its attitudes about basic social issues than married students in the past; very basic sex-role patterns still exist. The existence of traditional sex-role patterns without, at the same time, significant

differences in the BSRI scores, does not necessarily imply contradictions in the thinking and behavior of this population. Since society is not a rigid system, but is an ensemble of the new and the old, the permanent and the transitory, elements of new approaches to marriage, combined with a traditional outlook about what it means to be a male or a female, are bound to exist.

Still it remains to be seen whether women in this sample will be content to be homemakers or to simply work part-time to supplement the family income; perhaps they are simply postponing their educational and vocational goals until their husbands have completed their objectives. A longitudinal study that would follow this population for 10 to 20 years after the students have been graduated could conceivably answer these questions. It would answer the question of whether or not women delay or postpone their educational and vocational goals. It might lay the groundwork for a vocational development theory related to married women, the inference being that married women have a latent period of vocational development that begins to exert itself after certain circumstances, such as the husband's vocational plans, family finances, and child rearing have been reasonably worked out. Because of the expense and time involved, longitudinal studies are the exception rather than the rule. Yet they offer a rich body of information that is impossible to obtain from the "snapshot" approach to studying a particular population.

Divergence in BSRI scores by husbands and wives does not necessarily imply that there will be problems in a marriage. In fact, it may be that the role prescriptions adhered to by a couple have their own internal logic, thereby yielding differences in the sex-typed personality characteristics of each partner.

It might be informative if a sex-role inventory were utilized in conjunction with the BSRI on a heterogeneous population of married couples in order to discover whether there is a significant relationship between sex-roles and the sex-typed personality characteristics of husbands and wives. If significant relationships were found to exist between these two factors, the BSRI would be validated for use as a measure of inferred sex-role stereotyping.

Conclusions

This study did not uncover any significant evidence of sex-role stereotyping or stress in the marriages of student couples attending the University of Florida. Several factors may be responsible for this fact and they have been alluded to in previous sections of this chapter.

The homogeneity of the married student population with respect to age, educational level, and economic status may have seriously reduced variability with respect to BSRI and DAS scores. In conjunction with this fact, had significant differences between husbands and wives been found, generalization to the population of married couples across social strata would be limited.

In addition, most of the research data in this study were gathered from respondents in June, 1977, a month of transition for many university student couples. Events such as graduation, moving, and summer vacation coming as they did in the midst of the data collection, may have affected the ways in which subjects responded to the various instruments. For example, excitement over events such as graduation, future employment, and moving from one geographical location to another could color a person's perceptions about many things, including feelings

about the quality or current status of one's relationship with a loved one. Timing may be an important element to consider in conjunction with data collection.

Finally, the instruments themselves may not have offered a complete enough profile regarding the quality of life in marriage. Commensurate with this fact is the idea that other forms of data collecting including participant observation, group and individual interviews, and longitudinal approaches could have enriched the data, yielding a richer body of knowledge about the current status of married life among students in the university community.

APPENDIX A
BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY

Full Name _____
(Please print)

Sex _____ Age _____ School _____

Year in School _____ Occupation _____
(if not a student)

Telephone _____ (If you have no phone, please give us some way of contacting you, e.g., your address:)

_____

On the following page, you will be shown a large number of personality characteristics. We would like you to use those characteristics in order to describe yourself. That is, we would like you to indicate, on a scale from 1 to 7, how true of you these various characteristics are. Please do not leave any characteristic unmarked.

Example: sly

Mark a 1 if it is NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER TRUE that you are sly.
Mark a 2 if it is USUALLY NOT TRUE that you are sly.
Mark a 3 if it is SOMETIMES BUT INFREQUENTLY TRUE that you are sly.
Mark a 4 if it is OCCASIONALLY TRUE that you are sly.
Mark a 5 if it is OFTEN TRUE that you are sly.
Mark a 6 if it is USUALLY TRUE that you are sly.
Mark a 7 if it is ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE that you are sly.

Thus, if you feel it is sometimes but infrequently true that you are "sly," never or almost never true that you are "malicious," always or almost always true that you are "irresponsible," and often true that you are "carefree," then you would rate these characteristics as follows:

Sly	3
Malicious	1

Irresponsible	7
Carefree	5

1 NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER TRUE
2 USUALLY NOT TRUE
3 SOMETIMES BUT INFREQUENTLY TRUE
4 OCCASIONALLY TRUE
5 OFTEN TRUE
6 USUALLY TRUE
7 ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE

Self reliant	
Yielding	
Helpful	
Defends own beliefs	
Cheerful	
Moody	
Independent	
Shy	
Conscientious	
Athletic	
Affectionate	
Theatrical	
Assertive	
Flatterable	
Happy	
Strong personality	
Loyal	
Unpredictable	
Forceful	
Feminine	

Reliable	
Analytical	
Sympathetic	
Jealous	
Has Leadership abilities	
Sensitive to the needs of others	
Truthful	
Willing to take risks	
Understanding	
Secretive	
Makes decisions easily	
Compassionate	
Sincere	
Self-sufficient	
Eager to soothe hurt feelings	
Conceited	
Dominant	
Soft-spoken	
Likable	
Masculine	

Warm	
Solemn	
Willing to take a stand	
Tender	
Friendly	
Aggressive	
Gullible	
Inefficient	
Acts as a leader	
Childlike	
Adaptable	
Individualistic	
Does not use harsh language	
Unsystematic	
Competitive	
Loves children	
Tactful	
Ambitious	
Gentle	
Conventional	

APPENDIX B
DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
1. Handling family finances	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. Matters of recreation	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Religious matters	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Demonstrations of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. Friends	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. Sex relations	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Philosophy of life	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. Amount of time spent together	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. Making major decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. Household tasks	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. Leisure time interests and activities	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. Career decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0

	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	5	4	3	2	1	0

	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occa-sionally	Rarely	Never
19. Do you confide in your mate?	5	4	3	2	1	0
20. Do you ever regret that you married? (or lived together)	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?	0	1	2	3	4	5

	Every Day	Almost Every Day	Occa-sionally	Rarely	Never
23. Do you kiss your mate?	4	3	2	1	0

	All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?	4	3	2	1	0

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a Day	More Often
25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. Laugh together	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Calmly discuss something	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. Work together on a project	0	1	2	3	4	5

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometimes disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no)

	Yes	No	
29.	0	1	Being too tired for sex.
30.	0	1	Not showing love.

31. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

5 I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
4 I want very much for my relationship to succeed and will do all I can to see that it does.
3 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
2 It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.
1 It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
0 My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MARRIED STUDENTS

(Confidential Data)

1. Name of spouse filling out this questionnaire _____
   last first initial

2. What is your age? _____ years

3. What is your spouse's age? _____ years

4. Length of present marriage? _____ years, and _____ months

5. Since you have been married, how many terms have you and your spouse attended the U. of F. (include the present term)? _____ quarters.

6. What is the highest level of education you and your spouse have completed at the present time? (Check only the highest level).

WIFE	HUSBAND	
( )	( )	( ) 11th grade.
( )	( )	( ) 12th grade.
( )	( )	( ) 1st year of college.
( )	( )	( ) 2nd year of college.
( )	( )	( ) 3rd year of college.
( )	( )	( ) College Graduate.
( )	( )	( ) Master's degree.
( )	( )	( ) Medical, Law, Theological, or Specialist
( )	( )	( ) Ph.D. or Ed.D. degree
( )	( )	( ) Other, please specify _____.

7. What is you and your spouse's PRESENT student classification?

WIFE	HUSBAND	
( )	( )	( ) Not a student.
( )	( )	( ) Freshman.
( )	( )	( ) Sophomore.
( )	( )	( ) Junior.
( )	( )	( ) Senior.
( )	( )	( ) Graduate, first year.
( )	( )	( ) Graduate, second year.
( )	( )	( ) Graduate, three to four years.
( )	( )	( ) Graduate, more than four years.
( )	( )	( ) Other, please specify_____.

8. Which of the following describes you and your spouse's situation best? (Check one: full-time work = 40 or more hours/week).

WIFE	HUSBAND	
( )	( )	( ) Working, full-time AND not a student.
( )	( )	( ) Working, part-time AND not a student.
( )	( )	( ) Staying home, full-time AND not working.
( )	( )	( ) Working, part-time, AND a student, part-time.
( )	( )	( ) Working, full-time, AND a student, part-time.
( )	( )	( ) NOT working AND a student, full-time.
( )	( )	( ) Working, part-time AND a student, full-time.

9. How many children do you have in your family? _____

APPENDIX D
GUIDELINE FOR TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

The following format will be used when making telephone contacts to potential respondents. Leeway naturally will be made as questions come up. This format is governed basically by the assumption that the spouse on the other end of the phone is demonstrating a positive inclination to participate in the study.

Hello, my name is Dick Carner. I am a graduate student in the Counselor Education Department at the University of Florida and I am doing research on married college students for my doctoral dissertation.

It is my understanding that you are married and that you and/or your spouse is a student here at the University of Florida; is that correct?...

My study involves examining various factors indicative of stress and adjustment in the marriages of student couples here at the University.

This research may help college counselors and administrators understand more about the particular problems married students face while in school.

I would like to know if you and your husband (wife) would take approximately 20 minutes each in order to fill out several questionnaires that I have. If you decide to participate, the information that I obtain from you and your husband (wife) will be treated in a confidential manner at all times.

(If the respondent says that he/she will participate in the study the following statement will be made.)

I appreciate you and your husband's (wife's) participation in my study. In the next day or so a package of materials will be sent to you in the mail. Directions related to filling out the various materials will be placed on top. I shall appreciate it if you and your husband (wife) will fill out these materials and send them back as soon as possible.

Also it would be helpful if you both complete the questionnaires separately and avoid discussing your responses until after you have completed the materials and placed them in the mail. In this way, I will be assured that your responses will more accurately reflect your current attitudes regarding each question.

Do you have any questions at this point?...

Thank you once again for helping me out. Goodbye.

APPENDIX E
COVER SHEET

Dear Mr. and Ms...

Enclosed you will find (1) two copies of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, (2) two copies of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory, and (3) one Demographic Questionnaire for Married Students.

Each spouse is being asked to complete the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Bem Sex-Role Inventory. It does not matter who completes the Demographic Questionnaire for Married Students as long as it is filled out.

Please complete all of the materials and send them back, as soon as possible, using the return stamped envelope. Also, it would be helpful if you would both complete these materials seoarately and avoid discussing your responses until after you have completed the materials and placed them in the mail.

If you have any questions regarding these questionnaires or the research being conducted in conjunction with them, please do not hesitate to call me at 392-1575 or 377-1695.

Confidentiality of the information obtained from you will be maintained at all times.

Thank you for participating in this study.

Cordially,

Dick Carner
202-5 N. W. 15 Street
Gainesville, Florida 32601

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Richard M. Carner was born in Syracuse, New York, on January 2, 1948. His parents are Richard L. Carner and Carol R. Spivey. He spent the first 13 years of his life in New York state and with the exception of one year in Charlotte, North Carolina, he has been a resident of Florida.

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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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